

January 20, 2004 CPC



STAFF'S
REQUEST ANALYSIS
AND
RECOMMENDATION

04PW0218

William Sowers
(Pocoshock Commons – Better Kitchens & Bath)

Clover Hill Magisterial District
Pocoshock Commons

REQUEST: Waiver of Development Standards

William Sowers requests modification of the following Zoning Ordinance requirements:

Section 19-585.2(a) Route 360 Corridor East: Rural Transition. Specifically, the applicant requests relief from the requirement that architectural style must be compatible with residential architecture and relief from the prohibition on flat roofs.

Section 19-572 Loading Areas. Specifically, the applicant requests permission to use dense evergreen plantings to screen loading areas instead of berms or durable architectural material.

Specific language of Sections 19-585(a) and 19-572 is included in the background section of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the request with conditions for the following reasons:

1. The five (5) findings required for waiver approval are sufficiently addressed in the applicant's letter (attached).
2. The location of the proposed building is such that it does not have strong visibility from Hull Street, thereby minimizing any negative impact of a waiver to the design standards for this part of the corridor.

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3. The proposed architecture incorporates elements from both the colonial style residential offices along Hull Street and the block and metal office warehouse structures existing in the development making it compatible with both styles.
4. The loading areas are facing a residential community, but the limits of clearing for the project are over 300 feet from that community through a partially vegetated wetland area and dense evergreen plantings will provide adequate screening.

CONDITIONS

1. The brick finish depicted on the enclosed renderings shall extend down the west side of the western most building.
2. The exterior finish on the rear of the building shall match the color of the brick facades.
3. Mechanical equipment must be ground mounted and screened per Ordinance requirements, or a parapet must be constructed to screen the units from the residential property as well as from other public views.
4. Evergreen plantings shall occur in all areas deemed necessary to provide the required screening.
5. Evergreens plantings shall be Leyland Cypress, Eastern Red Cedar or a like tree and be a minimum of six (6) feet tall at time of planting.
6. An automatic sprinkler system shall be provided for the plantings used for screening purposes to ensure survival as well as rapid growth.
7. A parapet must be constructed at the rear of the building (facing residential property) to screen the view of the "galvalume" finish roof.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Associated Public Hearing Cases:

78S085 – Pocoshock Limited
73S112 – Lloyd C. Jounigan, Jr.

Developer:

William Sowers

Design Consultant:

Balzer & Associates - Site Plan and Architecture

Location:

260 feet off of the South line of Hull Street Road, fronting 475 feet on the east line of Pocoshock Boulevard. Tax ID 763-694-3857 (Sheet 11).

Existing Zoning and Land Use:

I-1 (Light industrial District); Vacant

Size:

6.59 acres

Adjacent Zoning and Land Use:

North - I-1; Office
East - I-1; Office/Warehouse
West - I-1; Vacant and Office/Warehouse
South - R-9; Multifamily Residential

BACKGROUND

“Section 19-585.2(a) Route 360 Corridor East: Rural Transition. All structures shall have an architectural style compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods. No visible flat or shed roofs shall be permitted. Compatibility may be achieved through the use of similar building massing, materials, scale, colors, or other architectural features.”

“Section 19-572. Sites shall be designed and buildings shall be oriented, in accordance with article I, division 4, of the Development Standards Manual so that loading areas are screened: (i)from view of any adjacent properties on which such uses are not permitted; (ii)from property in an A district that is designated on the comprehensive plan for a district in which loading areas are not permitted; and (iii)from any public rights-of-way except for limited access highways.”

This project is located within a ‘node’ defined by the Ordinance as being a part of the Route 360 East Corridor: Rural Transition. The architecture must be compatible with surrounding residential architecture. There is an existing row of office buildings along Route 360 that are strong colonial residential in style, but there is no other residential development on Route 360, adjacent to this site. There is an apartment complex to the south, but it is more than 300 feet away, on the other side of a creek and wetland area. Additionally, the other building in this project with frontage on Route 360 is an office warehouse that is constructed of concrete block and metal and not residential in style. The proposed set of three (3) buildings will be separated from Route 360 by the row of colonial office buildings, an internal drive and landscape area. Only the west end of the western most building will have clear visibility from Route 360 and this will only be a small window of visibility.

As stated above, this project and in particular the loading areas back up to an apartment complex. The limits of disturbance proposed for this project are over 300 feet from the closest building.

This intervening area is a partially vegetated wetland area adjoining Pocoshock Creek. The vegetation is dense, however it is primarily deciduous and would not provide complete screening in winter. Additionally, due to grade changes on the subject site, a wall of sufficient height to provide the required screening would be very tall and may be more visually intrusive than the actual use. The applicant has proposed using evergreen plantings to supplement the existing vegetation.

CONCLUSIONS

The Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Commission consider five (5) findings in its determination of development standards waiver requests.

Staff recommends approval of the waiver with the seven (7) conditions, based on the information provided.



December 30, 2003

Mr. Greg Allen
Chesterfield County Planning Department
9901 Lori Road
P.O. Box 40
Chesterfield, Virginia 23832

RE: Better Kitchens and Baths; Planning Commission Waiver

Dear Mr. Allen,

We are hereby requesting a development standard waiver to Ordinance Section 19-585.2 Route 360 corridor east: rural transition; in respect to the architectural compatibility and the type of allowable roof. Also, we request a waiver to Section 19-522(b) Screening requirements; in respect to the requirement for a wall, fence or berm.

In requesting this waiver the five factors for allowing a development standard waiver were considered and the responses are as follows:

1. This site is currently located near the intersection of Pocoshock Boulevard and Route 360 Hull Street Road. The site is situated behind existing office buildings and adjacent to an existing metal office warehouse. The rear of the property is bounded by the Pocoshock Creek, which provides heavy existing vegetation that buffers this property from the neighboring apartments on the other side of the creek.
 - a. A flat roof office warehouse with a brick façade, split block sides and rear loading facilities is proposed. The architectural design has taken into consideration that the neighboring buildings have two distinctly different architectural styles. The design proposed is architecturally compatible with both styles. The area does not have any visible residential character to be compatible with, and will be barely visible to the general public from Route 360. If required to maintain a residential colonial feel, this site would require several smaller buildings, which are not feasible given the topographic nature of this site. Furthermore, a "residential colonial feel" is fundamentally incompatible with the physical space requirements of a warehouse.

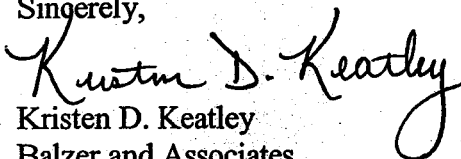
• PLANNERS • ARCHITECTS • ENGINEERS • SURVEYORS

501 Branchway Road • Richmond, Virginia 23236 • (804) 794-0571 FAX (804) 794-2635

- b. The owner would like to propose that the screening in the rear be accomplished with a single row of Leyland cypress. Due to the unique topographic nature and shape of the property, providing screening that entails constructing a wall to block all visibility of the loading area would create such a massive wall structure that it would become an object that would draw ones eye to it rather than soften the appearance of the rear façade. Due to the nature of this site, the rear of the building is directed towards a creek bed that has naturally vegetated woodlands that separate this site from the neighboring apartments. A berm would require a significant amount of existing vegetation to be removed.
2. Granting this modification will allow the developer to produce quality office warehouse space in an area of Chesterfield that is lacking such development. The surrounding buildings have been held accountable to only their individual zoning case requirements. The requirement for this building to be compatible with all other buildings nearby would be a hardship not shared by other properties in the area. Other nearby businesses with similar uses have been allowed to provide screening through landscaping only. A wall of sufficient size to screen the loading activity would create a bigger impact visually than the loading area itself and the disruption and devastation to existing neighbors to have either massive construction of a wall or excessive amounts of clearing and grading would be a great disservice to them.
3. The modifications requested, "will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of adjacent property owners; will not diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood; will not change the character of the district; and will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety or general welfare." The architectural colors and enhanced perimeter landscaping will provide an attractive method of screening for the residentially zoned properties. In fact a solid screen wall will increase the likelihood of vandalism and property damage. As with any site, visibility is a major concern of police to help reduce the threat of crime on a property. With a more translucent screening the threat of damage and endangerment to public welfare is reduced dramatically.
4. The situation of the property and intended use is not of so general or recurring a nature as to make reasonably practicable the formulation of a general regulation to be adopted as an amendment in the zoning ordinance. This is a unique situation and is not foreseen as a recurring issue in this area.
5. The project will still comply with the comprehensive plan for this area if the standard development waiver is granted.

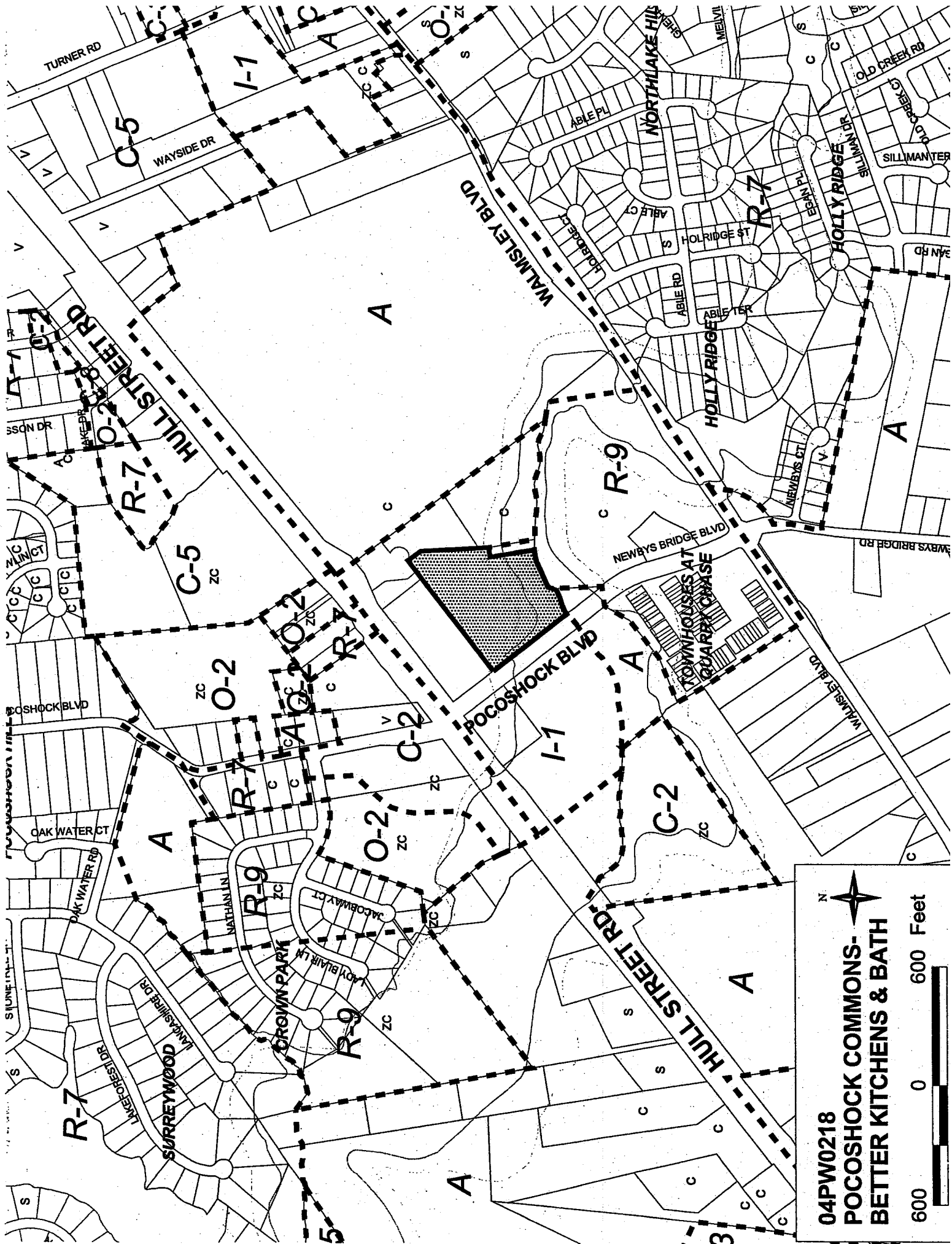
With the five factors considered the owner feels there is plenty of support to grant the waiver. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



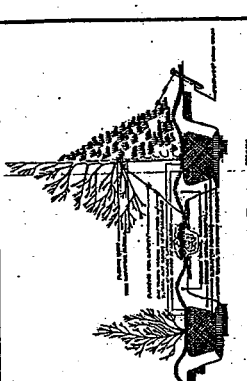
Kristen D. Keatley
Balzer and Associates
(Representatives for the owner)

cc: William Sowers



04PW0218
POCOSNOCK COMMONS-
BETTER KITCHENS & BATH

600 0 600 Feet












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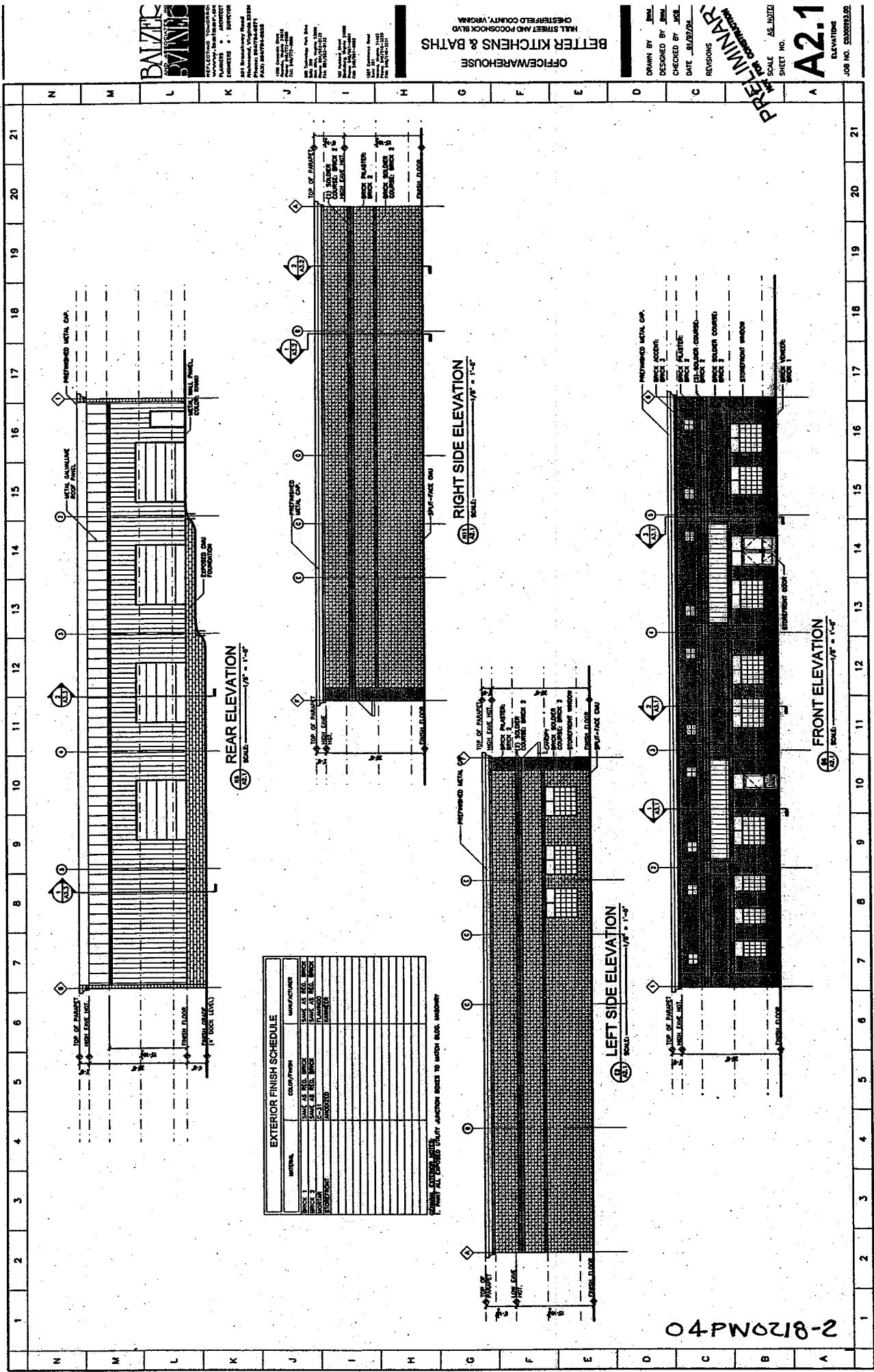
HANDICAPPED PARKING DETAIL

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CONCRETE WHEEL STOP

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0218-1



EXTERIOR FINISH SCHEDULE

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FINISH EXTERIOR NOTES:
1. MATCH ALL FINISHES TO MATCH BLOCK MASONRY

BALZAR
ARCHITECTS
101 Broadway Road
Richmond, Virginia 23136
Tel: 804/771-1000
Fax: 804/771-1001

BETTER KITCHENS & BATHS
OFFICEWAREHOUSE
HALL STREET AND POCOSHOCK BLVD
CHESTERFIELD COUNTY, VIRGINIA
Tel: 804/771-1000
Fax: 804/771-1001

PRELIMINARY
DRAWN BY: JML
CHECKED BY: JML
DATE: 8/18/04
REVISIONS:
SCALE: AS NOTED
SHEET NO.: A2.1
JOB NO.: 030093.00

04PW018-2